

GOD WITH US

by C. Gordon Wolcott (about 1979)

In all things around us, there is variance or departure from a strict norm. Mankind is made in the image and according to the likeness of God, yet in each one we see a variant from another. A lot of separate planning and record keeping is required, if all are to have the same opportunities in growing up. But that is not all for which our God is responsible. Look at the heavens. All the stars and planets and their satellites your eyes can see and more that you cannot see without optical helps are known to Him by their "names". In other words, He has to know the individual characteristics of each one, for those make up the gravitational pulls, magnetic strength, light radiation, heat radiation, invisible radiation, etc, must always be up to date on the record, if the "name" is to be known. All bodies are variants from the others. Each is variable in itself. Perhaps you know that the actual length of one year differs from year to year. The monthly lunar cycle is of differing total time from one to another. The shape of the planet varies with time. Its magnetic field wanders a bit. There is much to keep track of even on the earth planet, let alone in the billions upon billions of other bodies. Because of these differences and changes. periodic adjustments must be made in due time; otherwise progressive chaos and irreparable damage would result. It is abundantly clear that the whole of creation needs a very capable and skillful Keeper.

So do we of the human race need a perfect Keeper, and for the same reasons. God has planned all around a central pattern and He does not change. The microcosm "universe" of each person is designed on the general pattern of the grandiose universe around us. We are taught the Lord watches over every detail in each personal experience. He does! That is what we celebrate today; God with us, in whatever measure. It is a marvel, for there are over 4 billion people alive today, and He never plays favorites. Each person is variant from another and

almost every person is still as variable in himself as the wind on a summer day, moving this way and that without a moment's notice, lukewarm or cool. What an immense job to maintain control! Yet the Lord clearly states that, just as surely as He is the first in this large family (He is the Father), it is certain He will be with the last to mature, calling, inviting and guiding into a more perfect way. Think of the immensity of the programming for 4 billion children! Yet that is but a fraction of the job of managing the billions upon billions of bodies in space - so you should trust Him completely. His "track record" is excellent over millions of years. No wonder the Four Living Creatures closest to His Throne continue to exclaim, "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty, Who was, and Who is and Who is to come? The job takes unimaginable concentration of attention.

To His disciples, the Lord proclaimed Himself as the Way for all to follow. He entered His Father's business at age 12. For us, the corresponding juncture of time may be at our age 20, or 35, or 50 but, from then on, He expects each one to keep busy in His business. "Who then is the faithful manager set over those in the Lord's house to supply the precise amount of food at the critical time? Blessed is that servant whom his Master finds doing so when He arrives....The servant that did know his Master's will but did not prepare or act will be much beaten or harshly criticized during the Great Tribulation. The servant who did not know and did things worthy of such beating will be beaten or harshly criticized to a much lesser degree - to wake him up. Of everyone to whom much is given, much shall be required.

The time is now soon over for advance preparation for engaging in the business. He is soon coming to pay just wages for work accomplished - initially at the rapture of the Firstfruits and the Great Outpouring of the Spirit, and then at the time of the Harvest. Unless the building work is done and finished wholly within the frame of the Lord's Plan ("perish").

Blessed are those who themselves cleanse their own garments of soul and body with the cleansing agents given by the Lord. More blessed are those who then help others through the same process. This cleansing is the Father's business at this stage in the development of our microcosm "universe". He has provided the

"water of the Word" by which we may cleanse ourselves. That is symbolized by the careful chewing and assimilating of the unleavened bread into our being. He has provided His blood, at awesome and terrifying cost to Himself, for His us in cleansing and purifying our soul garment when we turn to Him (repent). That is symbolized by the wine, high in spirit. The wine, as the blood, in turn links with the New Covenant and therefore the faith as presented by Christ.

Receiving from Him suggests closeness to Him, at least within reach. This initiative on our part opens the way for Him to respond, when He sees there is a vessel waiting and expecting to receive. That is the pattern. We draw close to Him and then he will draw close to us. The more practice in earnest engagement, the closer will be the subsequent engagements. Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty, absolutely set apart for carrying out the Father's business. His call to each of us is an invitation to become holy in everything we think and do in our daily activities on and off the job, to become holy in every desire and emotion we permit to occupy our being, and to become holy in all judgments and decisions - for those will affect both body and soul.

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